

# DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Creating a Healthier Community One Home at a Time: *Housing Complexes Go Smoke-Free*

**San Bernardino.** The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health applauds the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino (HACSB) for taking an extraordinary step towards creating a healthier community for their residents. The Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners adopted a policy at the Yucaipa Crest Housing Complex, prohibiting smoking in all units and common areas after receiving residents' input in favor of the transition.

"The Tobacco Use Reduction Now (TURN) program assists partners throughout the County to help raise awareness about the effects of smoking and secondhand smoke, and working with the Housing Authority and its residents has proven very successful," states Michele Jacknik, Program Manager. Residents and local public health advocates congratulate the Housing Authority for this positive step towards protecting individual's health, particularly children and the elderly from secondhand smoke.

"As the Housing Authority strives for residents to reach self-sufficiency, it is also concerned for their health and well-being. Thanks to the overwhelming support of the residents, to date, four housing complexes throughout the County have been transitioned to non-smoking communities," states Susan Benner, HACSB's Executive Director.

Many California cities and local multi-unit housing complexes have begun to address the issue of drifting secondhand smoke by eliminating smoking in outdoor common areas and residential units. Outdoor common areas include swimming pools, outdoor eating areas, play areas, courtyards and other perimeter areas of multi-unit housing buildings. These policies protect residents from drifting secondhand smoke from neighboring units and restrict smoking in common areas.

Smoke-free policies provide residents and visitors with a safer community by limiting their exposure to the toxins in secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke has been proven to be a  
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deadly toxic chemical. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, it contains over 400 toxins and 50 cancer-causing chemicals. Even the briefest exposure to secondhand smoke can cause serious breathing problems for individuals with respiratory illnesses.

For more information on HACSB's smoke-free housing communities, call (909) 890-0644. To obtain resources on how to make your residence smoke-free, call the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, Tobacco Use Reduction Now (TURN) program at 1-(800) 637-6653.

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